

ANECDOTES FROM CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

My youngest sister⁶ and I liked to torment an older sister. One day when playing outdoors we took turns occasionally ringing the doorbell. Louisa became disgusted with our antics, so when it rang again she yelled "Come in if your nose is clean." It was the minister.

Our home stood on the top of a high hill, surrounded by other hills also with a home on each of them. One summer day a neighbor's house caught on fire. My sister, Lillian, (about 8 or 10 years old) grabbed a bucket of water, went to the front yard and called "Don't worry! I'll put out the fire." The house burned to the ground.

My father raised hogs for food and profit, also to sell shoats. One day a big one got out of the pen, crawled part way into a large food container and got stuck. When hog and all overturned I (about 6 or 8 years of age) tried to pull it out by the tail.

A neighbor, Mr. Wiley, and my father were having a contest to learn which could raise the biggest hogs in a certain period of time, starting with shoats the same age and size. My father's kept getting bigger and heavier. He won the wager. His secret--he aroused them forcibly every midnight and made them eat again. On the days that he did not work he would set his alarm so that he would get up at midnight to feed them. (At that time his shift at the glass factory was from noon to midnight.)

Dad always told me not to speak to a strange man. One day while I was walking home from school, a man approached and smiled, then laughed heartily. I recognized him by his incisor teeth which were grooved because of holding the long heavy blower's pipe for so many years in glass factories. He had shaved off his moustache and fooled me.

I used to pick all kinds of berries during the summer in order to buy necessities. My little bank was very precious to me. Once Dad asked me for a dollar in change. This I gave to him. When he returned the money he gave me a dollar bill. I was disappointed and felt cheated, because it was not in the nickels, dimes, and pennies.

Dad was stern for our own good, but loved us all dearly. One evening when the family was gathered around the table, we three younger ones got the "giggles" and couldn't stop. He really scolded us, after asking many times for quiet. We ran out the door into the long lane where we waited and waited, being afraid to return. When we finally did enter the house all was calm, quiet, and tranquil.

One Hallowe'en, we arrived home and when we lit the lamp in the kitchen, there stood an obnoxious-looking man. It was part of a tree Dad put there and dressed it as a man.

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Mother gave birth to a baby every other year for twenty years. She labored hard from early morning to late at night, seven days a week and start on the next of like unbelievable endurance, but she never complained. The only outward sign that she was upset about anything was when she would pleat the edge of her apron between her fingers, back and forth, again and again.

She was a calm, sweet, hard-working mother and wife. When Dad did not come to dinner one day, she waited and wondered where he could be. At last he appeared with a big bouquet of wild flowers to show his love for her on Mother's Day.

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